The Times-Dispatch

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FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 7, 1908.

> **I have seldom known one who departed from truth in trifles who could be trusted in matters of importance.—Paley.**

THE OBJECT OF CAPITAL PUNISHMENT.

The Memphis Commercial-Appeal heartily agrees with The Times-Dispatch that local hangings should be abolished, and that all condemned criminals should be executed inside the walls of the penitentiary. Our contemporary's article is reproduced elsewhere, and we hope that it will be carefully read by every member of the General Assembly. The arguments in favor of the proposed reform are overwhelming, and we do not see how any intelligent legislator can hesitate in reaching a favorable conclusion. Local executions are often bungled, and they always have a depressing and demoralizing effect on the community. They are supposed to be private, but a crowd is sure to gather about the place of execution, and many persons contrive in one way or another to witness the drop. Others are near enough to hear the "dull thud," and the entire performance is almost as bad as if it were in the open. It is an affliction which should never be visited unnecessarily upon any city, town or village.

Again, in local hangings the condemned person, especially if he be a negro, is regarded by his friends as a martyr, and not as a criminal, and there is corresponding resentment against the law and the powers that be. As for the "martyr," he rather enjoys the notoriety and sympathy which his situation gains for him. In all such cases the sentence of the law loses much of the effect it is designed to produce.

It would be far different if the sentence were executed in the penitentiary. As soon as the sentence of the court should be pronounced, the condemned person would be hurried away to the penitentiary—and be forever thereafter lost to the world. His friends would see him depart, and that would be the last of it. The very mystery of his taking off would be a terror to all evil doers.

It seems to us, from remarks we hear now and then, that many persons have an utterly false view of capital punishment. The government does not desire to take human life. The object of capital punishment is to save human life. The law does not take vengeance on a man who has killed another. There is no vengeance in the law, and hence the absurdity of quoting as an argument against capital punishment "vengeance is mine," etc. Civilized law is conceived, enacted and executed in kindness. Its every purpose is benevolent. Its prime and only motive is preventive. The penalty for murder is made severe, not only to prevent men from being murdered, but to prevent men from committing murder.

It was believed at one time that the best way to give warning was to execute criminals in public, but experience taught that public executions did more harm than good, and they were abolished. Having learned, therefore, that executions must be private to be wholesome in their effect, the more private we make them the better, and they would be most private and most effective in the penitentiary. There is no need of a spectacle; no need of an object-lesson in public. It is only necessary for bad men to know that the penalty of the law is sure.

IS THE LEGISLATURE BLIND?

In its report for 1907 the State Board of Fisheries says, page 19: "The planting interest in general must be encouraged by the State. The planter must have seed, which latter means oysters for shucking and shells for reseeding of bottoms." Continuing, the State Board of Fisheries quoted, with evident approval, a statement from a Baltimore newspaper in reference to Chincoteague Island. This article describes the extraordinary benefits which came to Chincoteague with the planting industry. Like the railroad, the telegraph, the spinning jenny, the cotton loom, or the typesetting machine, the planting industry was bitterly fought and ignorantly obstructed by the tongers, who believed its introduction meant their ruin. It was vain to argue that more wealth produced by the genius of cultivation would mean more money for the whole community, for on Chincoteague, as elsewhere, those who lived by taking the oysters which grew naturally believed that their bread depended upon preventing the planters from coming into competition with them on the bottoms which would produce seed.

Hear now the story of Chincoteague, as repeated by the State Board of Fisheries. When the inhabitants of that island lived by fishing and taking oysters growing naturally, there were only eighty to one hundred families, in great poverty and destitution, and the total value of all property on the island did not exceed $50,000. When, however, the cultivation of oysters by planting was undertaken, the island blossomed and prospered beyond the wildest dreams. Its inhabitants have increased sevenfold, and the property value has risen twentyfold, being now over $1,000,000. Schools are well appointed, and beautiful homes have replaced shanties; indeed, civilization and prosperity in their most essential forms have taken the place of ignorance, misery and poverty. To quote the paper above referred to: "When Chincoteague Island depended upon natural oyster beds, the people were poverty-stricken and led a precarious existence. Now, from the small and poor island, during the last thirty days, 2,000 barrels of oysters have been shipped every day, and that quantity will be shipped every day for the next thirty days. One hundred and twenty thousand barrels of oysters in sixty days, worth $200,000, from bottoms which have produced nothing! Ah, but we cannot have this in Maryland—the politician and the tonger forbid it."

How much longer will Virginia allow the tongers and the politicians who owe their place to the votes of the tongers, to throttle an industry which means millions of dollars and absolutely incalculable prosperity to the whole State? The orange groves of California, the olive trees of Italy, the vineyards of France, have nothing like the same natural advantage that the oysters of James River and Chesapeake Bay offer Virginia, and yet the selfishness of a few politicians and the ignorance of the rest of the State are effectually joined to destroy this vast source of wealth.

Why should Virginia seek new industries when her neglected oyster planting offers millions? And why should a few misguided tongers from the Tidewater make the whole State suffer great and unnecessary loss?

In view of its report, what is the State Board of Fisheries doing to remedy these conditions? Or if it is doing nothing, will the Legislature remain passive, silent and blind while all Virginia suffers?

FIRST-CLASS PASSAGES GOING CHEAP.

One man's meat is another man's poison, and vice versa. Competition is the life of trade, but now and then it is the death of traders. The rate-war now on among the leading transoceanic steamship companies is probably pretty hard on the companies. It is undoubtedly costing them a lot of money. But it is very nice indeed for the prospective traveler. The neglected consumer gets his innings once in a while, and this seems to be the once. The chance now confronts him, in short, to go to Europe on almost unprecedentedly favorable terms.

Most people have "been to Europe" who have the money. Most others mean to go when they do get the money. Travel is an alluring thing to most of us, and it is more than that. "In the younger sort," wrote Bacon, at a time when travel meant a sailing vessel and a post chaise, it "is a part of education; in the elder, a part of experience." This was long before the time when the "grand tour" came to be regarded as the one proper finishing-school for every young gentleman of fortune. But the opinions of both periods hold as true as ever to-day, while the means of putting them into effect have been immeasurably improved. Travel remains second only to reading and study as an educator, and it has possibilities of pleasure which reading and study, to many minds, must lack. And travel has changed, since Bacon's day, from the arduous undertaking to the pleasant commonplace. More can be seen in a month to-day than was possible in a twelvemonth a hundred years ago.

Europe, for many and obvious reasons, is the Mecca of American travelers. Those who have never visited it have an unusual opportunity to do so now. Those who have visited it may well regard bargain transportation as a sufficient excuse for doing it again.

CHILD LABOR LEGISLATION.

The question of child labor is one of the most difficult problems of the age, and the person who undertakes to draw up a bill for its regulation that will protect the child without trespass upon parental authority has a man's task.

The Times-Dispatch does not profess to have solved the problem, but it has no hesitation in saying that the Chamber of Commerce bill, as published in our columns yesterday, not only fails to meet the demands of the case, but is open to serious objections.

The bill provides in one of its clauses that "on and after March 1, 1909, no child under the age of thirteen years, and on and after March 1, 1910, no child under the age of fourteen years shall be employed, permitted or suffered to work in or in connection with any factory, workshop, mercantile establishment or mine of this Commonwealth; provided that this act shall not exclude any child over the age of twelve who is an orphan and dependent on its own labor for support, nor any child or children whose parent or parents are invalid and solely dependent upon the labor of such child or children for support, in either of which cases a certificate shall be obtained from the Mayor of the city or town, or from a justice of the peace of the county, setting forth the foregoing facts."

Another clause provides "that a permit allowing a certain number of hours of overtime in any month shall be granted upon application to the Commissioner of Labor or any State official duly authorized by the Commissioner of Labor to issue such permits, when satisfactory reasons for working overtime are given."

These provisions, if enacted, would encourage dodging, subterfuge and evasion of law, and would open the way to abuses and fraud.

CHARITABLE INSTITUTIONS AND JAILS.

"We had occasion recently to lament the degradation of the charitable institutions of Illinois," says the Indianapolis News, "due to the spoils system, and to rejoice over the completeness with which years ago Indiana emerged from that condition, presenting to-day a model of administration which Illinois regards with envy. But our Illinois friends are mistaken in speaking of Indiana as having a 'central board of control.' That system has been tried and found wanting. Indiana rejected it as unwise in its nature and operation and established separate bi-partisan boards for each institution, making the superintendent, in each case, freed from politics, the responsible executive head. Over all stands the Board of State Charities, with advisory and supervisory authority. This system in the last few years has placed the penal and benevolent institutions of Indiana among the first in the land."

Our Indiana contemporary admits that the jails of the State are as yet far from ideal, but there has been a vast improvement since the State Board of Charities began its work of inspection, and conditions are constantly improving. Why should Virginia hesitate to try this plan, which has proven to be so efficient and so beneficial in other States. It is not an experiment. It has been tested and proven. We owe it to ourselves as a civilized people to see to it that our jails and almshouses are decently kept.

Mr. Sale has offered a joint resolution in the Senate proposing an amendment to the Constitution so as to permit the Legislature to establish a board of control for any city having a population of 25,000 or more, that may desire that form of government.

What good will that do? What the people in the cities need is an amendment to the Constitution that will allow them to adopt the commission plan, if they so elect. It is absurd and un-Democratic for the Constitution to fasten upon the municipalities the burdensome, unwieldy, wasteful bicameral system. Give the cities the right of selection. Local self-government is the very essence of Democracy.

Old Bill Skillit reports to the police authorities that a bunch of masked men were discovered hanging around his Henrico county kitchens night before last, obviously awaiting an opportunity to steal in and embezzle the recipe for his golden and feather-light Sally Lunn. The parties were scared away by a few short barks from Chaw, the famous Skillit bulldog. Owing to the darkness of the night, Mr. Skillit is able to make no positive identifications, but he informs us that the wicked marauders looked remarkably like anarchist plotters from Houston, Tex.

Mr. Lambertson, of Brooklyn, told his wife such a funny story that she laughed her jaw out of place and could not speak for some time. As we understand it, Mr. Lambertson will send this story in a plain sealed envelope to any husband who will write for it, stating that he positively needs it in his business.

Alice Thaw shakes off a titled husband at about the moment that Gladys Vanderbilt attaches one. Immutable laws keep the number of American peeresses much the same from year to year.

The Washington Post, which maintains that "for a dot of $5,000,000 some men might even learn to love Carrie Nation," holds extravagant views as to the ingenuity and vigor of a man's affection department.

A great deal depends on the brand. Of course, if Virginia had a Legislature of the sort that infest Kentucky, Georgia and the Carolinas, we should now be taking the nervous-wreck cure at a spa.

The Atlanta Constitution complains bitterly, in a leading editorial, about "our miserable mail service." We are greatly surprised that our contemporary did not know enough to order the package sent by express.

The time has long since gone galloping by when Theodore Roosevelt could afford to have anything to do with a hidebound and mossbacked conservative like William R. Hearst.

"MacLean Nearly Free," announces the Washington Post headliner. This is very reassuring to us, as we had begun to fear that the old chap was approximately dead.

In the exciting rush for novel texts, candidates with a taste for homily must be extremely careful not to overlook "A stitch in time saves nine" and "Handsome is as handsome does."

It is true that Mississippi's new Governor is bald-headed, but it is denied that Hon. Vardaman snatched him so.

Visitors in our town doubtless noticed that the recent cold-snap did not extend to the warm-hearted and jolly little Richmond rye-ball.

"There is no place like Charleston," reiterates that city's News and Courier, as though anybody south of Matteawan would dream of denying it.

The Fairbanks boom, despite those twenty-six new-pledged Indiana delegates, remains not a condition, but a theory.

Some men commit suicide by arsenic, some by Paris Green and some (the wholly desperate) by Texas sausage.

London eats 800,000 eggs a year, which does not include infant consumption of the darning brand.

The national occupation of Korea is said to be doing nothing. That is the place for Congress.

Nobody seems to want Lodge as a candidate except Lodge and the Paragraphers' Union.

CASTORIA.
Bears the Signature of Chas. H. Fletcher.
The Kind You Have Always Bought

Rhymes for To-Day

LOVE SONGS OF AN INMATE.

15. A Little Dinner at Sophy's.

Sophy, I'm sick of the old-fashioned diet,
Grub they have cooked me and fed me for years,
Sick of the regular dinner-board riot—
Beefsteak and onions, and haply two beers.
Sophe, it is early—Get to work, girlie!
I am so weary of cabbage and tripe!
Your father's wealthy—Dear, keep me healthy!
Fix me a menu of truffles and snipe!

Cook me a sweet little canvas-back duckling,
Stew me some plover's eggs fresh from the plove,
Broil me—eh, THIS belt will stand some unbuckling!—
Broil me a sturgeon-steak—Sophe, there's a love!
I'm in rare fettle—Trot out the kettle!
Put the gridiron in place on the hob!
Get out the blue-pan—Fish out the stew-pan!
Hump yourself, Sophy, and get on the job!

Lay out the mushrooms and cheesed macaroni,
Heap up the strawberries red on the tray,
Make me a bushel of bisque tortoni,
Freeze me a dozen of cafe parfait!
I'll lay the covers—How go the plover's
Eggs that I ordered?—Well, trot, dear, and see!
Spry about, Sophy!—Don't get so loafy!
Not every lass has a sweetheart like me.
H. S. H.

MERELY JOKING.

Fulfilling Its Mission.

The stranger from Damascus, who never had been in Rhodes before, was looking at the great Colossus.

"I wonder what that thing is for?" he said.

"That's what it's for," explained one of the natives. "You guessed it the first time."

Casually remarking that there were six other wonders in the world without counting the Singer-Building, he strolled away and left the stranger still wondering.—Chicago Tribune.

Mean Joke.

"Isn't pa awful?" sobbed the young bride who eloped.

"What now?" faltered the bridegroom anxiously.

"Why, you know you told me to wire pa and tell him that we were really in need of food."

"And—and did he send the money?"

"No, he sent three big rolls of music and a note stating that as music was the food of love he hoped we would get on all right until we returned."—Chicago News.

A Reasonable Inference.

"You can't get something for nothing," said the man of severe principles.

"I have my doubts about that," answered Farmer Corntassel. "I've got nothin' fur somethin' in several trades, an' I can't see but what it worked the other way 'round fur the other feller."—Washington Star.

BILL SKILLIT AND OTHERS.

The Hon. Skill Billitt, of Henrico county, Va., is a constant purchaser of the stately sausage of Walker county, as he can induce Claude Swanson to eat no other kind.—Houston Post.

It may be necessary for the Richmond Times-Dispatch to send old Bill Skillit, of Henrico county, down to Charleston with orders to take the News and Courier paragrapher dead or alive.—Atlanta Georgian.

* * *

The Richmond Times-Dispatch thinks that because John L. Sullivan recently biffed a man for offering him a drink Chattanooga ought to take the temperance pledge.—Atlanta Constitution.

* * *

"Harry is going to be acquitted on the instalment plan," says the Richmond Times-Dispatch. That settles Harry; he'll never get out.—Washington Herald.

* * *

The Richmond Times-Dispatch has an editorial on "Mothers-in-Law." Take 'em all in. No discrimination. (Knew better.—Atlanta Constitution.

* * *

The Baltimore Sun declares that "Fairbanks is running for the presidency just like an icicle." The Sun having deliberately bared its neck for the ax. Sydnor Harrison, of the Richmond Times-Dispatch, will proceed to strike the blow.—Houston Post.

* * *

The Richmond Times-Dispatch begins to think, as it expresses it, that "the big stick is hollow inside." Would the esteemed T-D. tell us how it could be hollow elsewhere than inside?—Montgomery Advertiser.

Voice of the People.

The Times-Dispatch will print signed letters on all questions which relate to the public welfare. Such articles should not exceed in length 150 words, except under exceptional circumstances, should be signed with the full name of the writer, and should bear his or her address. The name of the writer will be withheld if desired.

Need of Schools.

Editor of The Times-Dispatch:

Sir,—After a painstaking and careful reading of "Greatest Need of the Schools" in Sunday's issue of your paper, you well say: "It is the most absurd contradiction in our scheme of government; it is the most wasteful of all our false economies." We employ experts to superintend our factories, our farms, our railroads and even our machinery. We leave the supervision of our schools and the operation of the delicate machinery of the system (?) to novices. This is not true of all cases, for Virginia has some good superintendents, but it is true as a general proposition and no reflection is meant upon the character of the superintendents. We are speaking of their accomplishments. It is no reflection upon a college professor to say that he is not qualified to operate a railroad; nor upon an expert railroad man to say that he is not qualified to teach a class in moral philosophy. But it would be ridiculous to place either in the position of the other. For supervision in any direction which is worthy of the name must be expert. The superintendent must have accurate knowledge of the words which he directs.

Teaching is a profession, and a superintendent of schools to be worth anything to the work and to the teachers "must know better than the teachers themselves how to direct a school, how to bring out the best that is in the pupils from dullest to brightest."

Surely this is wise, sound logic, squarely and lucidly set forth as to the "greatest need of the schools." A fortiori so with other great bifurcations of the departments for good government, silicet; so also as to the agricultural, mining and fishery commissions. Yes, "three times three" expert heads should be placed in aforesaid commission, ipso facto.

Why not as to schools? and especially as to the superintendents thereof, and especially to the great Corporation Commission, with its plenary powers and consummate jurisdiction? Not meaning to be invidious, let us scan the personnel of the Corporation Commission of Virginia as to their fitness in reference to or rather in their relation and knowledge of railroads. All gentlemen of the highest character and intelligence; but what is true as quoted from your last Sunday's article, entitled "Greatest Need for Schools," is so true that "one who runs may read"; ergo, what is good for "Peter should be good for Paul"; plainly, then, the great corporation Commission, which was delegated with such plenary power and clothed with judicial armor. Such armor should be fortified and made as nearly impenetrable as expert knowledge could imbue it with.

CHAS. M. WESSON.

Keeping a Contract.

Editor of The Times-Dispatch:

Sir,—The prosperity of this State and of this nation depends upon the prosperity of the farmer. But by our law-making bodies he is ofttimes overlooked. He is seldom clamorous, and his gentle pleadings may go unnoticed. But he is the backbone of the whole. I believe a law can be so framed as to help him. It will help others, too.

In this country it has always been true, and may always be true, that a large proportion of our professional and business men of the cities and towns come from the country. It is right that the boy that has greater adaptation for something else should leave the farm and follow the bent of his talents. But the country boy that understands the farm, that leaves the farm because he sees nothing before him, that goes to the city with nothing in view, is taking a dangerous step. The labor problem is leading to this step. Men of experience, that know how to farm, begin the year with hired help. All goes satisfactorily until about May or June, then, at the most important time, the laborers all walk off. This or something like it is repeated from year to year. After heavy losses, these men, in disgust and despair, give up, the farm is sold or put in the hands of tenants, and they and others become prejudiced against such a life. The boys rush to the city. Increasing the congestion in the non-productive class, farm lands decrease in value and general depression in the community results.

Whatever lessens faiths in employer and employe is a mutual injury. The laborer, in the end, will find himself as greatly injured as the landlord. The fact that the laborer keeps his contract, makes him a better and a more useful man, both to the community and to himself. The man that has constant employment is a better citizen, is further from being dependent upon the charity of others, is more respected by others and has greater self-respect. It is the unemployed or only half-employed that burden our criminal courts and curse our fair land.

A law covering the following points, I think, would help the cause:

A labor contract, to be binding, to be signed in the presence of a notary public or a justice of the peace. The contract must be read by the officer in the presence of both contracting parties before either signs it. Breaking the contract on the part of either, without just cause, to be fined $25. If not paid, to be worked out on the public roads. The justice of the peace to have jurisdiction over labor contracts.

There is nothing in this to force any person to make a contract. If he cannot make one that he can afford to keep, he need not make any. But it is due the employer and employe both that, where a contract is properly made, it be carried out in good faith.

W. J. TWILLEY.

Skipwith, Va.

Go to the Country.

Editor of The Times-Dispatch:

Sir,—I notice each day's report as to the condition of the poor of your city. Mr. Editor, it strikes me that a strong, healthy man or woman is anything else but poor financially. There is work in abundance for working people in my county—Didwiddie. Farm labor is in great demand and good wages; house help is badly needed, all at good prices. Any healthy family that will work can soon have a home with plenty around them if they will only save and work. The prices of farm products were never known to be any better. The trouble with the landowner, he cannot get the labor to make the crops at a price that is satisfactory. The schools of the country districts are good now, and there is no good reason why working people should flock to the city.

Mr. Editor, if your Associated Charities would find homes for the needy families in the country and send them out, I think they would perform a good work. Your city would have very much less work along that line to do, and many a family would do very much better; and when the cold spells come on they would not need charity, but would be able to dispense charity, as they would have their hog and hominy of their own to dispense.

Yurs very truly,
E. W. HUDGINS.

Olden Place, Va.

About Mr. Benjamin.

Editor of the Times-Dispatch:

Sir,—With regard to the story told of Judah P. Benjamin's wraith, in the issue of your paper to-day, I beg to say that the incident as told by the English gentleman was hardly founded on fact. He refers to the circumstance that Mr. Benjamin's offices were closed for several days before his death, and that he was missed. The facts are that Mr. Benjamin formally retired from practice in London on February 9, 1883; that the farewell banquet of the bench and bar was tendered him on June 30th of that year; that he spent the winter at Le Mans, and died in Paris, May 6, 1884.

It may be added to Dr. Pitt's comment that ghost stories have even less foundation than that which was given in the narrative.

Very truly yours,
E. N. C.

February 5, 1908.

STATE HANGINGS.

Leading Tennessee Newspaper Favors Penitentiary Executions.

"Local hangings," says The Richmond Times-Dispatch, "are barbaric and should be abolished. The crime for which a condemned person dies is committed against the State, and his execution should be a State and not a local affair."

There is sound common sense and decided political wisdom both in this position. There is no good reason for, but positive objections to, the policy that makes a county spectacle of a hanging. Long since the public punishment of a criminal has lost its deterrent effect upon the masses. Indeed, it is to be doubted if at any time in the world's history any such result attended public execution of the law's sentence, while it is pretty generally conceded that such grim sights brush the fineness from many souls, hardening some, sickening others and engendering a species of public morbidity that is far from wholesome.

It is true that executions are, these days, nearly always more or less private and apart; but in the smaller counties of the State there is always an unwholesome commotion stirred up whenever the sheriff is called upon to hang a criminal. By holding these executions at the State Penitentiary, where other State offenders are punished, the purposes of the law would be served, without bringing into existence the unhealthy mental excitement that arises when the execution takes place in the locality where the crime was committed. The question of cost is too insignificant to be considered, and as the offense calling for the death of the offender is as much against the State as a simpler felony, it seems logical to inflict the punishment for the one in the place where punishment is inflicted for the other.—Memphis Commercial-Appeal.

Hay's Hair Health

Never Fails to RESTORE GRAY or FADED HAIR to its NATURAL COLOR and BEAUTY

No matter how long it has been gray or faded. Promotes a luxuriant growth of healthy hair. Stops its falling out, and positively removes Dandruff. Keeps hair soft and glossy. Refuse all substitutes. 2½ times as much in $1.00 as 50c size.

IS NOT A DYE.

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$1.00 and 50c bottles at

OWENS & MINOR DRUG COMPANY

IN MARY'S REIGN

By BARONESS EMMUSKA ORCZY.

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CHAPTER XXXI.—Continued.

Through the door there came the sound of a slight clash of arms. The lieutenant of the Tower and his guard were impatiently waiting for their prisoner. Wessex saw Mary's whole figure stiffen at this muffled sound. Like an enraged animal she turned towards the door. For one second he wondered what she would do, how much humiliation her uncontrolled passion would heap upon him, through some mad, impulsive action. He jumped to his feet, and, regardless of all save the imminence of this critical moment, he seized both her wrists in an iron grip, striving through the infliction of this physical pain to bring back her wandering senses.

She looked him straight in the face with a tender and appealing gaze.

"Did you not know that I loved you even to humiliation?" she said.

"May God and all his angels bless you for that love," he replied earnestly, "but before Him and them I swear to you that if you do not allow the justice of your realm to have its will with me, I'll not survive your own disgrace and mine."

She closed her eyes, trying to shut out that picture of unbendable determination expressed in his whole attitude, and which she at last felt that nothing could conquer. The rigidity of her figure relaxed, the fury died out from her heart, she only felt inexpressibly sorrowful, helpless and broken-hearted.

"God be with you, my dear lord!" she whispered.

He kissed her hands. All the fever had gone out of them; they were icy cold. There was neither arrogance nor obstinacy in her face now; her eyes were still closed, and one by one heavy tears fell down her wan cheeks.

The pathos of her helplessness and of her crushed pride made a strong appeal to the sentiments of tender loyalty which he had always felt for her who was his Queen and liege lady. He saw that she was determined not to break down; that she was gathering all her courage for the supreme farewell.

"I beseech Your Majesty to allow me to order the guard," he urged.

She tottered and would have fallen, had he not put out his arm to support her.

"Do not forget that you are a Tudor and a Queen, and remember," he added quaintly, as her head fell against his shoulder, "remember . . . I am only a man!"

He led her back to her seat, then he touched the hand-bell, and when the page appeared he said firmly:

"I am at the lieutenant's service."

He knelt once more before the Queen and finally bade her farewell. She could neither speak nor move, and scarcely had the strength to take a last look at the loved one, as with a firm step he passed out of her sight.

There was a clash of steel against steel, a few words of command, the sound of retreating footsteps, then silence.

Queen Mary Tudor was alone with her grief.

CHAPTER XXXII.

A Bargain.

But Mary would not have been the woman she was if she admitted a failure whilst there was still a chance of victory.

The first half hour after Wessex's departure she gave way to weakness and to a flood of tears, then she turned to her prie-Dieu, and prayed fervently for resignation to the heavenly will, for strength to bear her cross.

"Holy Mother of our crucified Lord, pray for me now and at the hour of his death," was the burden of her passionate orisons.

"Take my life, since he must die," she added, striking her breast and falling prostrate before the holy images.

And then reaction set in. She felt more calm after her prayers, and began to think more clearly. The inevitableness of the catastrophe seemed to become less tangible, a persistent and hopeful "if" crept in amongst her desperate litanies. She dried her tears, rang for her waiting woman, had her face bathed with soothing scented waters, her temples rubbed with perfumed vinegar.

All the while now she repeated to herself:

"I will save him . . . I will save him . . . but how? . . how?"

She had less than twenty-four hours in which to do it, and she had spent fourteen days previously in the same endeavor, without arriving at any definite plan, save the one which had so signally failed just now.

"If being found guilty I were acquitted at Your Majesty's desire, 'twould be said the Queen had saved her lover —and then married a felon!" was his sole reply to her impassioned query whether he loved her and would be saved by her command.

She would have been content to lose her honor for his sake; he would not even jeopardize his own self-esteem for hers. If he had one spark of love for her he would have been content to challenge the opinion of the world, whilst accepting his life at her hands; but he cared naught about death, and all the world for another woman who was false, a coward, a wanton, and who boldly allowed him to sacrifice his honor for her, whilst she herself had none to lose.

"Then I will save him in spite of himself," repeated Mary for the hundredth time.

Suddenly a thought struck her. She rang the hand-bell, and to the servitor who appeared at the door she commanded briefly:

"His Eminence the Cardinal de Moreno—I desire his presence—here—at once."

The servitor retired and she waited in seeming calm, sitting at her desk, her trembling hand alone betraying the excitement of her mind.

Five minutes later the Cardinal stood before her, placid, urbane, picturesque in his brilliant flowing robes, with one white, richly beringed hand raised in benediction, as he stood waiting for the Queen of England to speak.

"I pray Your Eminence be seated," began Mary, speaking with feverish haste; "I have something of grave import to say to you, which brooks of no delay, else I had not interrupted you at your orisons."

"My time is ever at Your Majesty's service," replied the Cardinal humbly. "In what way may I have the honor to serve the Queen of England to-day?"

He was looking keenly at her face, not a single sign of her intense mental agitation escaped his shrewd observation. A satisfied smile lurked round the corners of his thin lips, and a flash of triumph lit up the depths of his piercing eyes.

That searching glance at Mary Tudor had told the envoy of the King of Spain that victory was at last within his grasp.

"My lord Cardinal," rejoined Mary firmly, "you are aware of the fact that His Grace of Wessex is on the eve of being tried by his peers, for a heinous crime of which he is innocent."

"I am aware," replied the Cardinal gently, "that His Grace stands self-convicted of the murder of my friend and colleague, Don Miguel, Marquis de Suarez, a guest at your Majesty's court."

"Truce on this folly, my lord," retorted Mary impatiently; "you know just as well as I do that His Grace is incapable of any such act of cowardice, and that some mystery, which no one can fathom, lies at the bottom of this monstrous self-accusation."

"Whatever may be my own feelings in this matter, your Majesty," said His Eminence, still speaking very guardedly, "I was forced to accomplish my duty when I made and signed my deposition, which I fear me has gone far towards confirming the guilt of His Grace."

"I have heard of your deposition, my lord. It rests on your finding His Grace's dagger . . . ."

"Beside the body of the murdered man, and still stained with Don Miguel's blood."

"What of that? Some one else must have used the dagger."

"Possibly."

"You did not suggest this in your deposition."

"It was not asked of me, by His Grace's judges."

"There is time to make a further statement."

"It could but be in consonance with what I have already said."

"And your servant?"

"Pasquale?"

"He lied when he averred that he heard angry words 'twixt His Grace and Don Miguel."

"He has sworn it upon oath. Pasquale is a good Catholic, and would not commit the deadly sin of perjury."

"You are fencing with me, my lord," said Mary Tudor with sudden vehemence.

"I but await Your Majesty's command," rejoined His Eminence blandly.

"My command?" she said firmly. "This, my lord, that you save His Grace of Wessex from the consequences of this crime, in which he had no hand."

"To save His Grace of Wessex?" he ejaculated with the greatest astonishment, "I? and at this eleventh hour? Nay! meseems that were impossible."

"Then Your Eminence can set your wits to attempt the impossible," rejoined Mary curtly.

"But why should Your Majesty suggest this strange task to me?" he urged with the same well-feigned surprise.

"Because Your Eminence hath more brains than most."

"Your Majesty is too gracious."

"And because you have the success of your own schemes more at heart than most," added the Queen significantly.

"Then, if I do not succeed in effecting the impossible, Your Majesty, am I to be sent back to Spain ignominiously to-morrow?" queried the Cardinal with more than a soupcon of sarcasm.

"No!" rejoined Mary quietly, "but if you succeed I will give you in reward anything which you may ask."

"Anything, my daughter? Even your hand in marriage to King Philip of Spain?"

"If Your Eminence succeeds in effecting the impossible," replied Mary firmly, "I will marry King Philip of Spain."

There was silence for a moment or two. His Eminence was meditating. Not that he had been taken unawares. For the past fortnight he had been expecting some such interview as the Queen had now demanded at the eleventh hour. He was far-seeing and shrewd enough to have anticipated that, sooner or later, Mary Tudor would propose a bargain, whereby he would be expected to pit his wits against fate, and thereby earn the victory, which she knew he coveted. The task was a difficult one—not impossible! for the Cardinal never admitted that anything was impossible. But he was peculiarly placed, and he knew the value of royal promises and of royal compacts. This one he thought he could enforce, but only if his methods were above suspicion. To have confessed the whole dastardly intrigue of that eventful night would certainly have saved the Duke from condemnation; but the tale itself would so disgust these stiff-necked Britishers that Mary would see herself easily released from her promise through unanimous public opinion.

That simple and sure method of obtaining the Duke's acquittal was therefore barred to him, and he had perforce to reflect seriously ere he closed with the bargain which Mary Tudor held so temptingly before him. His mind was clearer, less scrupulous than that of his colleagues, and he had most at stake now, for nothing but ultimate success could justify the heinousness of his methods. If his schemes failed, then these methods became monstrous and criminal beyond hope of pardon.

For the moment the Cardinal had no remorse. The sacrifice of every piece in the great human game of chess was of no importance, if the final mating of his enemies were gained. Don Miguel was dead, Lord Everingham far away, the wench, Mirrab, terrified at her own act probably, had disappeared, and no doubt would not be heard of again until His Eminence's victory was assured. This he had hoped to attain with the death of the Duke of Wessex and Mary's consequent grief and feebleness of will, always supposing that Lord Everingham did not return in time to ruin the whole scaffolding of his tortuous diplomacy.

That was the great danger, and one which was ever present before the Cardinal's mind—the return of Lord Everingham. Every day added to the danger, and it was Wessex's own impatience to see the end of his own shattered existence which had up till now saved His Eminence from exposure.

The Duke had urged that his trial should come on speedily. This was readily granted, for he was the Duke of Wessex still. The trial itself would not last more than the one day, seeing that the accused had made full confession, and only a few secondary depositions were to be read for form's sake. His Grace had refused counsel; there could be no argument. The judges, in the face of the circumstantial self-accusation, were bound, in the name of justice, to convict and condemn, in spite of public opinion, in spite of the machinations of the Duke's friends, in spite of the Queen's commands.

Once His Grace was out of the way, His Eminence had felt that he would be able to breathe more freely, but until then he was living on the edge of a volcano, and often wondered how it had not broken out ere now.

The news of the crime and of Wessex's arrest had been sent to Scotland, he knew that, but the way thither was long, the late October gales would make the journey by sea difficult, whilst the overland roads, sodden with the rain, were unusually bad; but, in any event, Everingham was bound to arrive in England within the next ten days, for, of a surety, he will have traveled with mad speed on hearing the terrible news.

But now Mary Tudor suddenly offered him a definite promise, a bargain which he could clinch before exposure had shamed him publicly. The task proposed was indeed difficult, but it was not impossible to such a far-reaching mind as that of my lord Cardinal.

A few moments' deep reflection whilst the Queen watched him eagerly and he had already formed a plan.

"Does Your Eminence accept the bargain?" asked Mary impatiently at last, seeing that he seemed disinclined to break the silence.

"I accept it, Your Majesty," he replied quietly.

(To be Continued To-morrow.)

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